

Bowing Styles in Irish Fiddle Playing Vol 3

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This is the third volume of a series of transcriptions of Irish traditional fiddle playing. The others are ‘Bowling Styles in Irish Fiddle Playing Vol I’ and ‘Bowling Styles in Irish Fiddle Playing Vol 2’. Volume 1 contains reels and hornpipes recorded by Michael Coleman, James Morrison and Paddy Killoran in the 1920’s and 30’s. Volume 2 contains several types of tune, recorded by players from Clare, Limerick and Kerry in the 1950’s and 60’s. Volumes I and II were both published by Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eirann. This third volume returns to the players in Volume 1, with more tune types.

In all three volumes, the transcriptions give the bowing used by the performer. I have determined the bowing by slowing down the recording to the point where the gaps caused by the changes in bow direction can be clearly heard. On the few occasions when a gap separates two passages with the bow in the same direction, I have usually been able to find that out by demanding consistency; if a passage is repeated with the same gaps between notes, I assume that the directions of the bow are also repeated. That approach gives a reliable result for the tunes in these volumes. (For some other tunes it doesn’t, and I have not included them.) The ornaments are also given, using the standard notation which is explained in Volumes 1 and 2.

The tunes come with metronome settings, corresponding to the speed of the performance that I have. These performances are from copies of the original 78 rpm recordings, on CD’s or on the internet, and the speeds I have given assume that the original recordings were indeed made at 78 rpm (revolutions per minute). That may not be correct because the actual recording speeds varied quite a bit. A more reliable assumption might be that the recordings were made at concert pitch (A=440). If that is true, the recordings that I have are mostly too fast because their pitch is mostly higher than concert.

As usual, the notation gives only an approximation to the note lengths. For double jigs and slip jigs, the first note in each group of three quavers is almost always longer than the other two. For hop jigs, highlands and barndances the first note of each pair of quavers is usual longer than the other one, but the rhythm is quite often reversed and I have indicated that by a bar over the second of the pair. For polkas the quavers are usually of about equal length.

A few remarks on the types of tune may be useful. Highlands are called in Scotland highland schottisches or highland flings, and are similar to the type of tune that is called in Scotland a strathspey. In Ireland they are called highlands in Donegal, where they are mostly played. Other terms used in

Ireland are flings, schottisches and strathspeys.

As a dance, the polka dates from the mid 19th century. The type of tune that is called a polka in Ireland is older though, and very widespread. It is used for dancing with a variety of steps all over the British Isles and North America, and in some parts of Europe. For that purpose, the tune is usually played slower than are the polkas in this volume.

There are just two hop jigs and one slip jig in this volume, all played by Michael Coleman. On the original record the hop jigs are both called The Foxhunter, but they are usually called The Foxhunter's Jig and Comb Your Hair and Curl it. Hop jigs typically have very few triplets while slip jigs typically have many triplets. The difference between them though, is not really in the notes but in the rhythm; indeed, both 'The Foxhunter's jig' and 'Comb Your Hair and Curl it' are often played as slip jigs instead of as hop jigs. The different rhythms for hop jigs and slip jigs are reflected in Coleman's bowing; the bowing for the slip jig is similar to the one that he uses for double jigs, but the bowing of the hop jigs is completely different.

Hop jigs are related to what were called hornpipes, when that term first appeared in the 17th century. Several collections of the latter were published around the year 1700, and they include tunes such as The Dusty Miller which are now played as hop jigs or slip jigs. I don't think any of these collections are in print, but some samples can be seen on the internet and I have a copy of one complete collection which is kept in the British Library.¹ Hornpipes of this kind, with three beats to the bar, survive as part of the repertoire of Northumbrian pipe players. These are played far more slowly than hop jigs, and with an even rhythm as opposed to the long-short long-short that is usual in Irish music. Assuming that the performance as well as the repertoire of Northumbrian pipers represents a continuous line of descent from the 17th century, we can infer that the hornpipes of that era were played in the same way.

The old hornpipes were written in 3/2 time, and consisted mostly of crotchets (six to a bar). The choice of 3/2 was convenient because pairs of crotchets in old hornpipes were often replaced by four notes and the choice avoided the use of semiquavers. In hop jigs and slip jigs, pairs of crotchets are instead replaced by three notes, and for that reason they are usually written

¹This is 'A collection of original Lancashire hornpipes old and new containing divisions upon each' by Thomas Marsden, published in 1705, and I thank Greg Stevens for supplying me with a copy many years ago.

in 9/8 time. In recognition of their different rhythm though, and of the fact that triplets are rare, I have used 3/4 for the Foxhunter's Jig and Comb Your Hair and Curl it.

Now I come to the bowing, leaving aside reels and hornpipes which were discussed already in Volume 1. Jigs are played with mostly single bows. The first note of each bar is usually an up-bow for Coleman (for jigs and for the slip jig), but a down-bow for Morrison and Killoran. The semi-quavers and slurs are inserted in a way that ensures that. Coleman's bowing for the hop jigs is quite different from his bowing for the slip jig, confirming the difference between the two forms. For the highlands, the bow changes are often across the beat so that the strong beat comes on alternate down and up bows. Highlands often have a lot of triplets, which are usually bowed separately. The bowing for barndances is similar to the bowing for highlands. The polkas are played with mostly separate bows for each note, but still with quite a bit of slurring.

On the next page is a list of the tunes, in the order that they appear. For each tune the title on the record is given first, followed in most cases by an alternative title or titles.

Michael Coleman

Reel: Bonny Kate

Hornpipe: The High Level

Jig: Richard Brennans Favourite

Jig: Tobins Fancy (Tobins Favourite)

Jig: Paddy Clancy's

Jig: A Trip to the Cottage (The Trip to the Cottage)

Jig: Tell her I am

Jig: The Old Grey Goose

Slip Jig: The Kid on the Mountain

Hop jig: The Foxhunter (The Foxhunters Jig)

Hop jig: The Foxhunter (Comb Your Hair and Curl it)

Highland: Killarney Wonder

Highland: Finnea Lasses

Barndance: James Gannons

Barndance: James Gannons (The Belle of the Ball)

Polka: Caseys (Up and Away)

Polka: Caseys (Dennis Murphys Polka)

Waltz: Mrs. Kennys Waltz

James Morrison

Reel: The Skylark (composed by James Morrison)

Jig: Mist on the Meadow (The Maid on the Meadow)

Jig: The Stick across the Hob (Morrison's jig)

Highland: Highland Bonnet (as a Kerry Slide; the Weavers)

Barndance: The Curlew Hills

Barndance: The Peach Blossoms (James Gannons)

Paddy Killoran

Hornpipe: ODonnells

Jig: The Coach Road to Sligo (The Blackthorn Stick)

Jig: The Luck Penny

Polka: Memories of Ballymote

Polka: Memories of Ballymote (Gurteen Cross)

BONNY KATE (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 114$

5

9

13

17

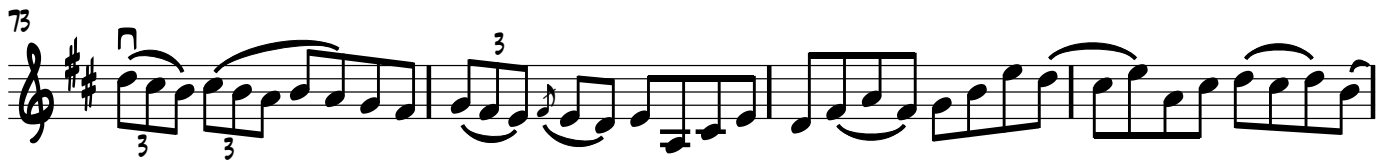
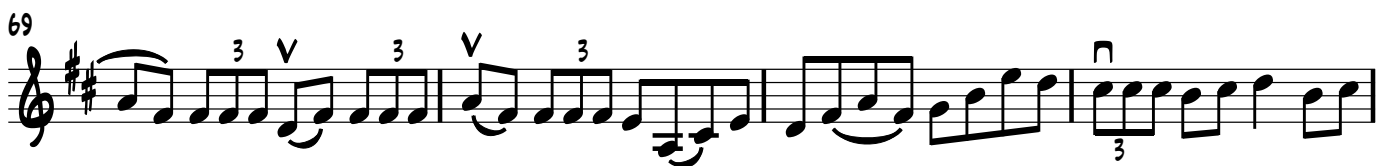
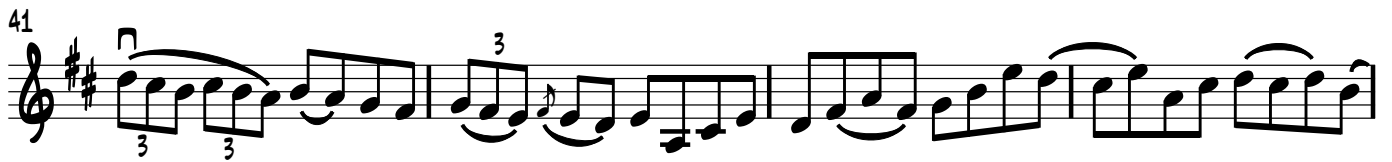
21

25

29

33

37



85

3 3 3

89

3 3 3 3

93

3 3 3

97

3 3 3 3

101

3 3 3 3

105

3 3 3 3

109

3 3 3 3

113

3 3 3 3

117

3 3 3 3

121

3 3 3 3

125

3 3 3 3

THE HIGH LEVEL (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 95$

1

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

RICHARD BRENNAN'S FAVOURITE (MICHEAL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 152$

7

12

18

23

29

TOBIN'S FAVOURITE (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

♩. = 142

6

12

18

24

28

PADDY CLANCY'S (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

♩ = 154

6

12

18

24

28

The musical score is written in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 6/8 time. It consists of six staves of music. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 154. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and ornaments.

THE TRIP TO THE COTTAGE (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 154$

7

13

19

25

29

TELL HER I AM (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 150$

7

13

19

25

31

37

43

46

THE OLD GREY GOOSE (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 142$

1

7

12

17

22

28

34

40

46

52

58

64

70

76

81

86

91

96

THE KID ON THE MOUNTAIN (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

♩. = 151

1

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

THE FOXHUNTER'S JIG (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 73$

6

11

COMB YOUR HAIR AND CURL IT (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

♩. = 73

6

11

14

KILLARNEY WONDER (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 101$

5

9

13

17

21

23

FINNEA LASSIES (FLING) MICHAEL COLEMAN

$\text{♩} = 101$

5

9

13

17

21

JAMES GANNON'S 1 (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 94$

1

5

10

15

19

23

27

30

JAMES GANNON'S 2 (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 94$

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of six staves of music, with measure numbers 6, 11, 15, 20, and 23 indicated at the beginning of their respective staves. The piece features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and includes several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes). Accents (marked with a 'v' over a note) and slurs are used throughout to indicate phrasing and emphasis. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

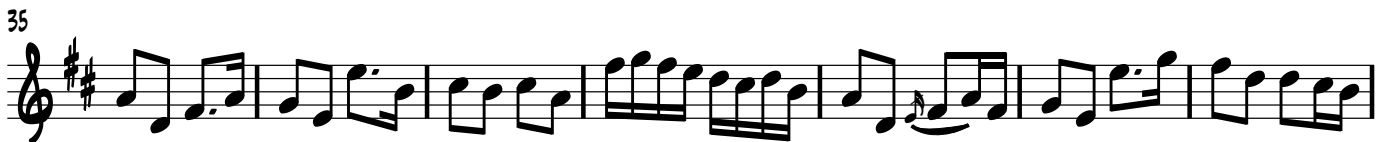
CASEY'S 1 (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

♩ = 120

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 2/4. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 120. The score consists of six staves of music, with measure numbers 6, 11, 16, 22, and 28 indicated at the beginning of their respective staves. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Notable musical elements include triplets (marked with a '3' and a bracket), accents (marked with a 'v'), and slurs. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the sixth staff.

CASEY'S 2 (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

♩ = 120



MRS KENNY'S WALTZ (MICHAEL COLEMAN)

$\text{♩} = 162$

7

13

19

25

31

38

45

52

58

THE SKYLARK (JAMES MORRISON)

$\text{♩} = 124$

1

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

MIST ON THE MEADOW (THE MAID IN THE MEADOW) (JAMES MORRISON)

$\text{♩} = 127$

6

12

17

23

28

MORRISON'S JIG (JAMES MORRISON)

♩. = 137

7

13

18

23

28

THE HIGHLAND BONNET (JAMES MORRISON)

♩ = 87

5

9

13

THE CURLEW HILLS (JAMES MORRISON)

$\text{♩} = 101$

1

5

9

14

19

23

27

30

JAMES GANNON'S (JAMES MORRISON)

♩ = 101

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

38

2

43

Musical notation for measures 43-45. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 43 starts with a triplet of eighth notes (F#, G, A) followed by a quarter note (B) and a quarter note (A). Measure 44 features a triplet of eighth notes (G, F#, E) with a 'v' above the first note, followed by a quarter note (D) and a quarter note (C). Measure 45 contains a quarter note (B), a quarter note (A), a quarter note (G), and a quarter note (F#) with a slur over the last two notes.

46

Musical notation for measures 46-48. Measure 46 begins with a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (G) with a 'v' above it, and a quarter note (A) with a 'v' above it. Measure 47 has a quarter note (B) with a 'v' above it, a quarter note (A) with a 'v' above it, a quarter note (G) with a 'v' above it, and a quarter note (F#) with a 'v' above it. Measure 48 consists of a quarter note (E), a quarter note (D), a quarter note (C), and a quarter note (B) with a 'v' above it. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

O'DONNELL'S (PADDY KILLORAN)

$\text{♩} = 98$

4

8

12

16

20

24

28

30

COACH ROAD TO SLIGO (PADDY KILLORAN)

ALSO CALLED THE BLACKTHORN STICK

The musical score is written in treble clef, key of D major (one sharp), and 6/8 time. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 151. The piece consists of six staves of music, each starting with a measure number: 1, 7, 13, 18, 23, and 28. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and ornaments. Dynamic markings include accents (v) and breath marks (n). The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the sixth staff.

LUCK PENNY (PADDY KILLORAN)

♩. = 151

6

11

16

21

27

32

37

43

48

MEMORIES OF BALLYMOTE (PADDY KILLORAN)

♩ = 113

8

15

23

28

GURTEEN CROSS (PADDY KILLORAN)

$\text{♩} = 113$

7

13

20

27